

Working together, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) continue to coordinate with local, state and federal officials to address the human health and environmental impacts of Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath, especially the water systems in the affected areas. TCEQ has 500 people assisting in response to this natural disaster. As of Sunday, Sept. 3, the following information is available:

Drinking Water: To date, about 2,800 drinking water systems are potentially affected by Harvey have been contacted. Of those: 1,920 systems are fully operational, 168 have boil-water notices, and 50 are shut down. Both EPA and the TCEQ are contacting remaining systems to gather updated information of their status. EPA and the TCEQ are working closely with the Texas National Guard, including the 6th Civil Support Team (supporting TCEQ in Corpus Christi), Arkansas National Guard, 61st Civil Support Team (supporting TCEQ in Houston), and the Texas State Guard Engineering Group, and other local and state agencies to continuously monitor water systems. Assistance teams are in the field working directly with system operators to expedite getting systems back to operational status.

Waste Water and Sewage: Currently, 903 of approximately 1,219 wastewater treatment plants are fully operational and 34 are inoperable in the affected counties. The agencies are aware that releases of wastewater from sanitary sewers are occurring, due to the historic flooding and are actively working to monitor facilities that have reported spills, conduct outreach and provide technical guidance to all other wastewater facilities in flood-impacted areas. EPA and TCEQ are working closely with the Texas National Guard, including the 6th Civil Support Team (supporting TCEQ in Corpus Christi), Arkansas National Guard, 61st Civil Support Team (supporting TCEQ in Houston), and the Texas State Guard Engineering Group, and other local and state agencies to continuously monitor wastewater systems. Assistance teams will be deployed to work directly with system operators to expedite getting systems back to operational status.

Residential Wells: EPA is developing a plan for sampling residential wells and is coordinating with the TCEQ to establish several locations where residents can bring water samples from their wells to be tested. If a private well is flooded, the water should not be used from the well until the following three things have occurred:

1. Flood waters have receded from the well and the plumbing system;
2. The well has been disinfected as well as the plumbing; and
3. The well has been sampled and laboratory analysis report has confirmed that the disinfected water contains no bacteriological contaminants.

Guidance for private well owners can be found at www.tceq.texas.gov/response/hurricanes.

Flood Water: Water quality sampling will be focused on industrial facilities and hazardous waste sites. Floodwaters contain many hazards, including bacteria and other contaminants. Precautions should be taken by anyone involved in cleanup activities or any others who may be exposed to flood waters. These precautions include heeding all warnings from local and state authorities regarding safety advisories. In addition to the drowning hazards of wading, swimming, or driving in swift floodwaters, these waters can carry large objects that are not

always readily visible that can cause injuries to those in the water. Other potential hazards include downed power lines and possible injuries inflicted by animals displaced by the floodwaters.

Critical Water Infrastructure: The agencies are continuing to work closely with dams. The larger dams are full in many cases and may be releasing water; the structures are secure at this time. There are 340 high- and significant-hazard dams in the impacted areas, and TCEQ has been able to make contact with 200 of these dam owners. Of these 200, only five dams have been damaged or have failed. We have also been notified that three low-hazard dams have damage. TCEQ is continuing to contact dams to get status updates.

Additional EPA/TCEQ updates include:

- **Superfund Sites:** EPA and TCEQ continue to get updates about the status of specific sites from the parties responsible for ongoing cleanup of the sites. So far, TCEQ staff have assessed 12 of the 17 State Superfund sites in the affected areas. TCEQ anticipates completing the remaining 5 assessments by the end of the week depending on accessibility of those remaining sites. **Federal Superfund Sites Update Insert Here.** The most recent information can be found at www.tceq.texas.gov/news/releases/status-of-superfund-sites-affected-by-harvey.

- **Air Quality Monitoring:** One of the many preparations for Hurricane Harvey included EPA, TCEQ, and other monitoring entities temporarily shutting down several air monitoring stations from the greater Houston, Corpus Christi, and Beaumont areas. Since then, state and local authorities have been working to get the systems up and running again. As of Tuesday September 5, TCEQ air monitoring network is 100% operational in Corpus Christi, 88% in Houston, and 71% in Beaumont.. The network is expected to be fully operational again by next week. Of the available air monitoring data collected from Aug. 24-Sept. 2, all measured concentrations were well below levels of health concern. Monitors are showing that air quality at this time is not concerning, and residents should not be concerned about air quality issues related to the effects of the storm.

- **Fires at Arkema Facility in Crosby:** The TCEQ has an open investigation into the Arkema incident that will include an evaluation of any impacts due to the fires at the site. Additionally, after the final notifications are received, the TCEQ will evaluate the reported emissions events to determine compliance with applicable rules, permit provisions, and notification and reporting requirements. The TCEQ and Harris County Pollution Control are coordinating post-event monitoring, sampling, and complaint response activities. The U.S. Chemical Safety Board has initiated an investigation, and law enforcement continues to limit access to the Arkema plant in Crosby. For more information regarding Arkema, please visit <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/news/statement/statement-on-arkema-investigation>

- **Refineries/Fuel Waivers:** In addition to gasoline waivers for 38 states and D.C. and diesel waivers for Texas, EPA signed three No Action Assurance letters on Sept. 1 to help address fuel shortages. NAA will help expedite the distribution of existing gasoline supplies to both Texas and Louisiana, while the refineries work to re-start and resume normal operations. The waivers and NAA letters are effective until Sept. 15 and should allow for the distribution in Texas of 10 million or more gallons of fuel to consumers. TCEQ is working with EPA to consider an extension to the gasoline waivers through October 1st.

For additional information please visit the TCEQ's hurricane response page.